

REMARKS

Claims 29-139 are now pending. The Examiner issued a requirement for restriction that groups the claims as follows:

<u>Group</u>	<u>Claims</u>
I.	44-59 and 122-139
II.	71-121
III.	29-43 and 60-70

Applicants provisionally elect Group I with traverse. Applicants are puzzled by the grouping of the claims. Previously, the Examiner issued a restriction requirement that grouped the claims as follows:

<u>Group</u>	<u>Claims</u>
I.	29-43
II.	44-59 and 71-85
III.	60-70
IV.	85-121

This previous grouping is inconsistent with the new grouping. Previous Groups I and III have been combined into new Group III. Applicants are not sure whether the Examiner's position is that the claims of new Group III are directed to the same invention. Applicants request clarification. Previous Group II, which was previously elected, has been split into new Groups I and II. Applicants do not understand why previous Group II has been split into separate groups. The Examiner states that new Groups I and II are related as subcombinations that are disclosed as usable together in a single combination. Applicants respectfully disagree. All these claims are directed to automatic authentication when a bid is being placed and most of the claims explicitly recite manual authentication when the automatic authentication is unsuccessful. Thus, these claims are not directed to different subcombinations, but rather to the overall concept of automatic authentication. There are not multiple subcombinations that are claimed separately.

No fees are believed due with this communication. However, the Commissioner is hereby authorized and requested to charge any deficiency in fees herein to Deposit Account No. 50-0665.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this restriction requirement.

Respectfully submitted,

Perkins Coie LLP

Date: September 12, 2003

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Maurice J. Pirio", is written over a horizontal line.

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